THE

# EVIDENCE;

OR,

## Religious and Moral Gazette.

*RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE THE BASIS OF HUMAN FELICITY.*

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## THE LIFE OF THE

### APOSTLE PAUL.

*(Continued from page 43.)*

IN conformity to the views which he had embraced, Paul now engages in the bitterest persecution against the Christians. Not having Christ to combat in person, who was now exalted to the right hand of the father, he aims destruction against his humble and defenceless followers. To blot the name of Christ from the world, he now offers all his abilities. And who than Paul was better qualified to execute the design? He had all the powers of reasoning to an astonishing and unequalled extent.—And these were accompanied with an eloquence most forcible and splendid, which entitled him to a rank in no respect inferior to that of the first Grecian or Roman Orator.—Not confined, his eloquence was of every description. It was elevating and pleasing, lofty and soothing, resembling at sometimes "the thunderings of Sinai, at others, the music of the spheres." To all human appearance, to meet such a powerful foe, how unequal a few plain fishermen, unprotected by the civil power, feeble and weak in themselves, and pleading the cause of the despised Nazarene, who but a little before had been crucified and slain!

BEHOLD from this time Paul of Tarsus, volunteering and proffering all his powers to prostrate the rising sect. Patient under fatigue and hardship, propelled by passion, with a heart bent on its object, and with uplifted weapons, he goes forth resolved on conquest. And what is more, he comes forward under a sense of duty, feeling and thinking that he is verily serving God; as he expressly declares. "I verily tho't with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing also, I did in Jerusalem." Thus prepared, with his victims marked out, he in the first place opens his mouth in horrid blasphemy against the redeemer and saviour of the world. And how wonderful that long-suffering compassion which did not cut the silken cord and let fall the wretch into the lowest hell! How astonishing the grace, the pity which could spare! But blasphemy against the Son is not unpardonable. Christ could save the vilest monster of a blasphemer, and call him by words of eternal life to the bosom of the father, "with exceeding joy." In the case of Saul mercy shielded from the impending stroke. Though the heavens resound, and the tainted air wafts on high, the most heaven daring blasphemies, curses and imprecations, against the "wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting father and the Prince of

Peace," yet the blood shed on Calvary cries, spare him, spare him! In this, all the inventive powers of his soul are on the stretch for expressions and accumulated epithets are sought out to render the Saviour awfully vile and his name to the last degree odious and abominable. Poetic images are called in, personification and allegory must assist to heighten the coloring, if possible, to tinge the object with a deeper dye.

Blaspheming Saul, couldst thou do all this against thy maker, thy preserver, and the redeemer of thy soul? Couldst thou send up to the throne, and resound through the universe thy hellish malediction! Thou didst do it. Thou wast heard in all God's wide dominion. And was not this enough to satiate thy malice? It was not enough. Thou must breath out threatning and slaughter! As Christ is beyond the reach of thy weapons, thou wilt aim thy vengeance against his worshippers. At the martyrdom of Stephen, Paul was present and with hands and voice uplifted consents to his execution. Stephen is led forth to the fatal spot. And who could behold him without melting into tears of compassion! A man condemned for no crime, condemned for worshipping the living and true God in spirit and in truth! Paul could behold the object! He could hear Stephen's rehearsal, his vindication and dying speech without misgivings. Instead of mediation to prevent the murder, he crouds it to its issue. Young men are selected to execute the horrid martyrdom. It was not, however, enough for Saul to know they had done their work and that Stephen was no more. He must act a part in the awful tragedy. If it be not his lot to cast the fatal stone, he must be gratified in keeping the garments of the murderers to shew that he was with them in feelings, and with his whole heart, sanctioned and approbated the bloody scene. In testimony, we have his own words. "And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death and kept the raiment of them that slew him." What was Saul standing by! Could this give him pleasure! Yes, such was his inveteracy to whatever bore the name of Christian, that the agony and mangled remains of Stephen feasted his inmost soul. And does he not stop here? Does not his conscience rouse from slumber! Not in the least. The sight of blood enrages his thirst for more murder. Like the ravenous wolf which having tasted the blood of a tender lamb, is impelled with increasing ardor for more prey, till he shall have devoured the whole flock; so this desperate persecutor redoubles his efforts, with fresh hopes of gratifying his desire in making a full end of all the espousers of the christian cause. This appears from another declaration of his own. "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the Chief priests, and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every city, and compelled them to blaspheme, and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Saul was confined to no one mode in venting his odium against the kingdom of the redeemer. As his genius was various and suited to enterprises of every description, so his persecution, shaped itself in all possible forms.

To such lengths had Saul now gone in his furious zeal to extirpate Christanity from the earth, and such success had crowned his impious endeavors, that he receives commission from the chief priests to carry

his system into all the extent of its operation. Clothed with authority and delegated by those who viewed themselves the peculiar favorites of God, he meets his work with a resolution, which promised infallible success. A zeal, which drove him even to madness, stimulated every particle of his nature, and his menacing aspect and brandished sword, portended destruction wherever he went. Like a mighty tempest gathering and just ready to burst and leave all in ruins, Saul goes forth to discharge all the evils of his invention on the objects of his detestation.

Regardless of age sex or condition, he acts without descrimination of objects, within the circle of Christ's foilowers. Aged decrepitude, and defenceless infancy are no security against the blood-thirsty foe. Female delicacy and gentleness, with all the winning graces of tenderness and love could make no impression on his obdurate soul. The affectionate mother is dragged from her little ones clinging to her embrace in wild and frantic agony, and crouded into the horrid dungeon. This in substance is confirmed by sacred declaration, "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and hailing men and women, committing them to prison." Persecuted, christians flee from city to city, and from region to region. But Saul closely pursues them and gives them no rest day nor night.

That his conquest might be entire, and devastation mark his steps whithersoever he went, Saul overlooked no measure in any degree favorable to his object. A part of his artifice was to compel Christians to blaspheme the name of Christ, and abandon his cause. In this, all his talents were unquestionably exerted. Subtle reasoning, the most flattering proposals, inducements from interest, honor and preferment were all figured to the imagination, and with an eloquence most pleasing and insinuating, and addressed directly to the passions. If unable to draw christians from their stedfastness by this expedient, he would hold out to them the horrors of the sword, the gibbet, and the flames.

Moving on in this horrid career with high commission and authority, Saul at length sets out for Damascus. Suppose him now on his way. And about what must a mind like his be employed? He was planning schemes and how to execute them. He was, undoubtedly, counting up the number he should imprison, the number he should burn at the stake, the number he should draw in quarters, and the number he should crucify; and that this expedition to Damascus, would finish the fate of christians throughout that region. With a heart full of enmity against God, he is plotting against Christ. Intoxicated with rage, and breathing out slaughter he goes on. He advances. No stinge of conscience, no misgivings deter him from his course. Proceeding on, at length he arrives to a certain spot. A spot to be remembered, and which he will not lose from his recollection, during a never ending eternity. More memorable than the bank where Israel stood, when Moses said, "stand still and see the salvation of God." It was at mid-day. As he relates the account to King Agrippa. It was when the sun was in his meridian splendor. And suddenly—in the twinkling of an eye, "there appeared unto him a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, and them that were with him. And when they were all fallen to the ground, he heard a voice saying unto him in the Hebrew

tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? and he said who art thou Lord? and he said I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But arise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness of these things, which thou hast heard, and of those things in the which, I will appear unto thee." The weapons of persecution instantly fell from his hands A work of divine grace was wrought in his heart which brings more of God into view, than is exibited in the whole material universe. The enmity of his heart is subdued by the positive act of the divine spirit, he is made a worshipper of the Redeemer, and offers this fervent cry to him, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" This change was none of his own seeking. God was most emphatically, "found of him who sought him not." The change was irresistible and instantaneous. He did not perceive the power which renewed him only in the effects produced. The change was wrought at once and not progressively. Exactly as soon as the total enmity of his heart against Christ was subdued, love to him succeeded. There was no space between them. His last unregenerate exercise was when his heart was at entire enmity against God. The next exercise instantaneously following was in degree holy, and caused him to glory in Christ "as the chiefest among ten thousands, and one altogether lovely."

The joyful event reaches the ears of the saints, Here is a blessed fruit in answer to their prayers. When Paul was persecuting in the fury of his zeal, he was one of those for whom Christ's secret worshippers were on their knees, wrestling with God in prevalent entreaty. They were then doing as Christ taught on the mount, praying "for him who dispitefully used them, and persecuted them." And how great must be their joy, how elevated their praise! And was theirs all? No there was joy in heaven. Angels and the spirits of the just catched the tidings, and a song of thanksgiving, and adoration filled God's holy temple on high.

*(To be Continued.)*

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE

## EVIDENCE.

*AN EXTRACT.*

For us my brethern, in Christ the testimony of these arguments is sufficient; but for yonder intrepid atheist, it is not sufficient. And why? Because he is too self sufficient and exalted—too independent a being to brook the idea of acknowledging the existence of a being superior to himself. He is without, reason, thought, or argument, convinced that man was rolled into existence out of a tumultuous chaos, and is, and was the noblest production of his creator—chance, yet lord of the whole earth. Are not these thy tenets, O! thou infidel? If so, I beseech thee, to humble thyself so much for once, as to reason calmly on the existence of a being superior to thyself. There are an infinitude of objects in nature, all bearing testimony to this subject, and on which thou mayest without dishonour, exercise thy noblest faculties. Go, I beseech thee into yonder wilderness where the savage foot only has ever trod, where the blooming forest smiles, and where the blushing rose opens its leaves to the morning sun.

Behold the variety and harmony of uncultivated nature, and then ask thyself, was chance the cause of all this beautiful scenery? But if this be a research below the majesty of

thy mind, if it be an employment too rustical for thy powers, turn your eyes on that part of nature which has approximated farthest toward perfection. Behold him who has soar'd most sublimely into astronomic science, who has numbered the stars of heaven, who has measured their spheres and called them by their names! Behold him who has developed the hidden ~~component~~ parts of bodies, who has dissected the animal, who has penetrated the earth & ranged the extent of organic nature! Behold him, and reason with him, who analized the human mind, who defined its powers, and who reduced its operations to fixed laws. Behold these, and at the same time all the great and the good from time immemorial, and while you behold them, remember that they received instruction from the lips, and laid their honors at the feet of Jesus.

Be assured a Newton, a Boyle, a Locke, a Hale, an Addison, and a Milton were christians. Great as they were, they all acknowledge a self existent God not only, but also themselves sinners and Jesus their redeemer. And wilt thou boldly confront their testimony to a God, and dare embrace "dwarfish infidelity which in vain lifts up its deformed head to mock omniscience and almighty power." If thou darest this, extend thy bold attempts, regulate the ordinances of Heaven, lift thy voice to the clouds and command abundance of rain, let the lightning flash through the heavens, bind the sweet influences of "Pleiades, loose the bands of Orion, bring forth Mazzaroth in his seasons and guide Arcturus with his sons." Attempt all these things, and when thou findest thy attempts vain, drop into thy original diminutiveness and become a christian. Then exclaim with those whom thou dispisest, "bless the Lord O, my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name."

## AN EXTRACT

*From an address of the Trustees of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, &c.*

The Directors of the London Missionary Society, in their letter above referred to, observe: "We "have to inform you, with the sin- "cerest gratification, that the zeal "for the honor of Christ, and the "earnest desire for the conversion "of the heathen, which were evi- "denced at the formation of the "London Missionary Society, have "neither subsided nor abated. Our "annual meeting appears to interest "the religious public as much as "ever. Ministers in considerable "numbers. attend them from eve- "ry part of the united kingdom; "and their union and co-operation "in so good a cause occasion a re- "action of animation and energy, "which is evidently felt in these as- "semblies, and which continues its "operations, when the ministers "return to their respective residen- "ces. Thus while we are endeav- "oring to convey blessings to oth- "ers, we are gratly blessed our- "selves. May this collateral inter- "est and blessedness be increased "and perpetuated in Britain, in A- "merica, and in every country and "Society, in which a zeal for the "divine glory is felt, and a love to "the souls of men is manifested! "The zeal of our brethern is not "confined to one object. It appears "to have been lighted at the sacred "altar of missionary duties; but "the flame has diffused a light on "other very important objects, and "has excited ardent desires and vi-

" gorous exertions for their prose-
" cution and accomplishment. Va-
" rious plans and institutions of be-
" nevolence and utility have been
" founded.—These are all honora-
" ble characteristics of the zeal and
" liberality of the British public, and
" they promise very considerable
" benefit, both to the particular ob-
" jects they are intended to serve,
" and to the general cause of nation-
" al and religious improvement. Be-
" sides the pleasure we hope you
" will feel at this intelligence, it
" may be impressed on your minds,
" that similar efforts on your parts
" may produce important benefits
" among your community."

The report of the directors to the London Missionary Society, at their last meeting, has been published in the Connecticut evangelical Magazine. The Trustrees refer the readers of this address to that report, for information on the subject of missions to the heathens. Other Missionary Societies in great Britain continue their efforts to propagate the gospel in countries where it is unknown. In some instances, particularly in Tartary and the East-Indies, these efforts have been happily crowned with success; and there is a most pleasing prospect that God will, ere long, greatly enlarge the kingdom of his dear Son.

The present is a period calculated very deeply to impress the considerate mind;—a period in which surprising changes are taking place in the political situation of many nations. Great events,—events which affect the condition of vast numbers of the human race, and which are almost unexampled in the history of the world, follow each other in rapid succession. The only consideration which can give consolation to the mind, amidst these changes and revolutions among the nations of the earth, is that the omnipotent reigneth. He will cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain. All events shall be made ultimately to advance his glorious designs respecting his Church; and there is reason to hope that the violent convulsions which agitate so great a part of the earth, are a prelude to that happy state of things, spoken of in the prophetical writing, when nation shall no more rise up against nation, and the inhabitants of the earth shall learn war no more. Let the hope of this animate all to do whatever lies in their power towards spreading the savor of the Redeemer's name; and to unite in devout prayer to God, that the kingdoms of this world may speedily become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, of whom it is said, "His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations sall call him blessed."

*Conn. Evang. Mag.*

## SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

Isaac Newton, a most celebrated English philosopher and mathematician, and one of the greatest geniuses that ever appeared in the world, was descended of an ancient family, which settled for three centuries upon the manor of Woolstrope, in Lincolnshire, where he was born, on christmas day, 1642. At twelve years of age, he was sent to the grammar school in Gratham; and at eighteen, removed to Trinity College at Cambridge, in 1660.

His uncommon strength of mind was exhibited at an early age; being particularly attached to mathematical studies, he soon made himself master of Euclid, and, that author was dismissed, as too plain and simple to employ his time, he advanced at once into more sublime

studies; and it is certain, he had laid the foundation of his two immortal works, the Principia, and Optics, before he had completed the twenty fourth year of his age.

When Newton had finished his Principia, it required some time, before the world could understand his philosophical principles. The best mathematicians were obliged to peruse it with the utmost attention, before they could make themselves masters of it; and those of a lower rank were afraid to venture upon this work, till encouraged by the testimonies of the most learned: but at last, when his genius came to be more fully known, the approbation which had been so slowly obtained became universal, and nothing was to be heard, from all quarters, but one general shout of admiration.—"Does Mr. Newton eat, drink, or sleep like other men?" said the Marquis de l'Hospital, one of the greatest mathematicians of the age, to the English who visited him. "I represent him to myself as a celestial genius, entirely disengaged from matter."

It is impossible, in this sketch, to give a particular account of his discoveries, which were so extensive as to embrace the universe. It is said by Keil, that, "if all philosophy and mathematics, were considered as consisting of ten parts, nine of them are entirely of his discovery and invention."

Dr. Ryland makes the following remarks on the character and writings of this great philosopher.

"In Sir Isaac Newton's Dissertation on Daniel and Revelations, you see the greatest geometrician in the world, who understood the nature of demonstration, as well as any man that ever lived, bowing his understanding to the revelation of God, and studying that revelation all his days; we are assured, that his Bible was always lying on his table or desk before him. The character and practice of this great man, is more than sufficient to weigh down to eternity all the Bolingbrokes and Humes, the Rousseaus and Voltaires, that have ever lived, or ever will live to the end of time. Let the modern free thinkers, or rather half thinkers, or no thinkers, hide their heads in confusion and darkness, instead of standing up with impudence against so great a master of reason and philosophy."

*(Rylands contemplation.)*

Mr. Addison remarks, that it, is an agreeable entertainment, to reflect on the various shapes under which the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has appeared in the world. The Pythagorean transmigration, the sensual habitation of the Mahometan, and the shady realms of Plato, do all agree in the main points, the continuation of our existence, and the distribution of rewards and punishments, proportioned to the merits or demerits of men in this life.

But in all these schemes there is something gross and improbable. Whereas nothing can be more rational and sublime, than the christian idea of a future state. Eye hath not, seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for those that love him. The above mentioned schemes are narrow transcripts of our present state; but in this indefinite description, there is something indefinitely great and noble. The mind of man must be raised to a higher pitch, not only to partake the enjoyments of the christian paradise, but even to be able to frame any notion of them.

*(Addison's Evidences.*

## AN EXTRACT.

RELIGION! fairest progeny of Heaven!
To trace thy beauteous features, and display
Thy shining glories, have I now essay'd;
Select from creation's ample field,
To emulate thy beauty, roseate hues:
But all, and more than all, that bloom on earth,
Or brightest minds enrapt could e'er conceive,
Or fancy with her brilliant figures form,
Fall short to paint the beauties of this fair.
O for a pencil dipt in heav'nly dies!
A seraph's hand's *still wanting* to depict
The perfect beauties of this heav'nly Queen!
*Here* then my song shall cease, until anew
I tune my lyre to more exalted strains,
On spicy mountains in Jehovah's realms,
And raise far higher notes, from purer flames
Of love; in concert with the glorious throng
I *seem'd* to hear, which set my soul on fire,
In soliloquy to vent all her joy.

*How cease*, till one kind office is perform'd,
Which inclination prompts, and one request
Is made! the patrons of my first essays,
Deign ye to stand, and listen to my song;
For whom I've ventured forth to stand the rage
Of *folly's* num'rous race, Religion's foes.
Receive with kindness what I proffer you,
And more than gold, or pearls, or precious stones,
Than rubies, gems, or diamonds glitt'ring bright,
Tho' charming in your eyes, *far more* I give:
Gay youth! to you this song is sent; design'd
To teach you to be young and gay forever;
How you may flourish in immortal green,
Grow young with age, to ripen for the skies,
Where all is youth and vigour, health and joy,
Perennial, without end, knows no decay.
"Remember thy Creator," is a wise
Command; 'twill fortify your tender minds,
And help to conquer those *vile* youthful lusts,
Which wage perpetual war against the soul,
And slay the conquer'd; your ruin will prevent,
And help to walk in safety's peaceful paths.
A God forgotten, ruin is begun;
A God forsaken, is destruction near;
A God despised, is misery complete;
A God remember'd, turns the soul to Heav'n,
Prevents from rushing on destruction's point;
A God adored, is happiness begun;
A God embraced, is happiness complete.

*(Fitch's Poems.)*